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Mr. TONG's
SERMON

Preach'd at

Salter's-Hall,

FOR
REFORMATION.

Mr. TONG'S
SERMON

Preach'd at

Salisbury Hall,



REFORMATION.

4^d
A
S E R M O N

Preached at

Salter's-Hall,

Before the

S O C I E T I E S

F O R

Reformation,

On Monday, October the 4th, 1703.

And now Publish'd at their Request.

By WILLIAM TONG.

L O N D O N :

Printed for Tho. Parkhurst, at the
Bible and Three Crowns in Cheapside,
near Mercer's-Chapel. MDCCLIII.

10. Nov. 1703.

A
SERMON

Preached at

Salter's-Hall,

By the

SOCIETIES

FOR
REFORMATION



And now published at their request.

BY WILLIAM TONG

LONDON

Printed for J. G. Smith, at the
Sign and Three Crowns in Chancery
Lane, near St. Dunstons Church, M.DCCC.IV.

TO THE

Right Worshipful

Sir *Thomas Lane,*

AND

Sir *David Hamilton,*

KNIGHTS.

YOU may justly wonder,
my most Honoured
A Friends,

The Dedication.

Friends, that I should shelter this plain Discourse under your Patronage, which was neither Preached in your Hearing, nor Printed at your Request. But I am well assured, the Subject and Design will be always pleasing to you; and I have Reason to believe, your Respect for the Unworthy Author will cast a Mantle of Love and Candour over the Weaknesses of the Performance. I must never forget that most Friendly Zeal which you, Gentlemen, with many others, expressed for my coming amongst you; I can appeal to your selves, it was altogether

The Dedication.

gether Unsought for, Unsolicited on my part; which I mention not as what Lessens, but Enhances, my Obligations to you; I perswade my self, the most grateful Returns I can make, will be faithfully to Discharge my Ministerial Work, in promoting your Faith, Holiness, and Comfort; you expect no other Service from me, and you can have no greater.

The Good Work of Reformation, which this Sermon recommends, has a great dependance upon Persons of your

B 2

Qua-

The Dedication.

Quality and Station, whose Example and Interest will serve it more than many such Discourses as these. Your constant Practice declares it to be your Judgment, that no Families can be safe from the Contagion of Sin, where the Worship of God is not Duly and Conscienciously kept up. It is my earnest Desire, not only that you may Persevere in so great a Part of Practical Religion, but that all of us, that name the Name of the Lord, may continually Honour him, as the God and Governour of our Houses.

The Dedication.

I take that to be a most Serious and Weighty Expostulation, which I met with in the Preface to an excellent Treatise, called, The Curfed Family, Written by the Pious and Learned Mr. Risley of Lancashire, the only Survivor of Six Reverend Ministers, that Sixteen Years ago set me apart to the Work of the Ministry, by laying on of Hands. His Words are these,

“ What will you make of
“ true Piety? What would
“ you have Christianity to
“ be

The Dedication.

“ be ? A despised Inferi-
“ our ? To Stand or Fall,
“ to Come and Go, at your
“ Pleasure ? Taken in, Cast
“ out, Used a little, and
“ then laid Aside ? It
“ cannot be such a Thing ;
“ True Religion and Chri-
“ stianity is that Thing
“ which breathes Heavenly,
“ Regenerating , Renewing ,
“ Recreating , Influences ; it
“ is that same Ancient, Sa-
“ cred, Awful, Thing that
“ pierceth the Soul , the
“ Heart , and the Consci-
“ ence, and by the Power of
“ God changeth the whole
“ Man, &c.

Such

The Dedication.

Such a Christianity as this, exemplified in all the Professors thereof, would mightily Facilitate the Reformation of the Rest of Mankind; and how Pure and Peaceful, how Happy, and how Divine, would it make those Souls that are possessed of it?

But I shall transgress the Rules of Decency, in Writing a long Epistle, where perhaps it may be thought more proper there should have been none at all; I shall therefore take my leave, Craving your favourable Acceptance of

The Dedication.

*of this small Token of Ho-
nour and Gratitude from,*

Gentlemen,

Your Faithful,

Obedient,

Servant,

W. Tong.

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S E R M O N

Preached at

Salters-Hall, &c.

H E B. XII. 3.

*For consider him that endured such
Contradiction of Sinners against
himself, lest ye be Wearied, and
Faint in your Minds.*

IT is not without some difficulty
to my self, that I comply with
the Request of those worthy Gen-
tlemen that have called me to the Ser-
vice of this Day.

B Not

Not that I am ashamed of the Cause of Reformation, or afraid to appear in it, or that I think much of my Labour amongst you; but I am yet so much a Stranger to you, so little acquainted with the Persons and particular Methods, by which this good Work is carried on, that I must needs Judge my self the unfittest Person you could have pitch'd upon to Advise you upon this Occasion.

But since it must be so, I will not spend your Time in any thing that may look like Excuse and Compliment, but apply my self to the Work of the Day with all possible Plainness and Fidelity.

I do consider several Years are now past since this Work was first begun, and you have had a great many excellent Sermons from one Place and another to Animate and Direct you in this your Pious Task.

I am affraid at present you labour under some pressing Difficulties, which, like a dead Weight, hang upon the Wheels

Reformation of Manners. 3

Wheels of your Endeavours, and make them move more Slowly and Heavily than heretofore; and yet I hope they are mistaken that tell us, there is little or nothing now done in the Business of Reformation, besides Preaching and Hearing Reformation Sermons.

I must confess it is a very discouraging thing, to see that this Vile and Common Enemy you have so long and so resolutely encountred, should still be able to keep the field, and maintain its ground against you; no doubt when you first engaged in this Honest and Honourable Design, in which you had the Laws of God, and Nature, and the Nation, on your side, you promised your selves, that, by this time, you should have surmounted all your Difficulties, and brought your Work to a good Degree of Perfection; *That the Wickedness of the Wicked would have come to an End*; that gross and scandalous Sins would have ceased, and Offenders would have

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thank'd you for your Charitable Pains and Care to prevent the Ruin of themselves and their Families.

But you find Corrupt Nature, and long Custom in Sin, are not so easily Conquered; this Enemy is an inveterate one; it is the *Desolation of many Generations* that you have attempted to repair; and notwithstanding your good Design, and your great Diligence, you find your selves Embarrass'd, Contradicted, Reviled, your Persons Assaulted, your Lives Attempted, by obstinate, insolent, Offenders.

If I have really hit upon the present State and Exigence of your Case, I know not what could be more proper for me to offer unto you, than such a Word as this in the Text, *Consider him that endured such Contradiction of Sinners against himself, lest ye be Wearied, and Faint in your Minds.*

It was a Consideration proposed to those who were *striving against Sin*, v. 4. in another Manner than what you

Reformation of Manners. 5.

you are called to; not by bringing others to suffer for Evil doing, but by suffering themselves for doing Well, a much harder Task than yours; and if it was serviceable to them under greater Discouragements, it must needs be suitable to you under lesser Difficulties.

That this Word may, by the Blessing of God, answer so Great and so Necessary an End, and may prove indeed a *Word upon its Wheels, a well accommodated, well circumstantiated, Word*, I would enlarge a little upon it under these following Particulars.

1. The Design you are engaged in is very much the same with that for which our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ came into the World.

2. While you are engaged in the same Design, you must expect to meet with the like Contradiction of Sinners against your selves.

3. This Perverseness and Contradiction of Sinners will be a great Temptation

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tation to you to grow Weary, and Faint in your Minds.

4. You must by no Means yield to this Temptation, but, notwithstanding all the Contradiction of Sinners, adhere to your Cause, and go on with your Work.

5. The best Means that you can use to prevent your Fainting and Desponding in your Work, is to look unto Jesus, to consider him that endured such Contradiction of Sinners against himself.

1. The Design you are engaged in is very much the same with that for which our Lord Jesus Christ came into the World. If your Design were altogether Foreign to his, his Example would be very little Encouragement to you. I do not say it is altogether the same, but it is very much so, and you do eminently serve and follow the Captain of your Salvation in your Pious Undertaking.

Christ's

Reformation of Manners. 7

Christ's Design in coming into the World was Twofold.

1. To Propitiate and Appease an offended God.

2. To destroy the Works of the Devil.

1. To Atonement and Appease an offended God; this he did by making Satisfaction to Divine Justice; in this Work you are so far from being Partners with him, that you do not so much as pretend to serve under him. *He trod the Wine-press alone, and of the People there was none with him, Isa. 63. 3.* His Priesthood was after the Order of *Melchisedeck*, an Individual, Personal, Everlasting, Priesthood; not managed by a Succession of Men, as the Levitical was, but all accomplished by Christ himself in his own Person.

When you bring Offenders to Con-
dign Punishment, you do not suppose
that

that you thereby propitiate the Deity, or make Satisfaction for Sin. The Papists foolishly pretend, that there is something Expiatory in their Penances; and it has been the Barbarous Custom of Turks and Pagans, in Times of common Calamity, to Sacrifice their Enemies, sometimes their Friends and their Children, to *the unknown God*, making their Altars to Reek with Humane Gore and Carnage: *But you have not so learned Christ*; you know very well the sufferings of profligate Wretches, even when they extend to Life it self, can be no Satisfaction to the Justice of God, though they may be a Satisfaction to the Justice of the Nation.

And yet for all this it may be truly said, that by your holy Zeal and Diligence you please God, and may be Instrumental in turning away his Wrath from the Nation; you may stand in the Gap, and make up the Breach; not by any Act of Atonement or Satisfaction, but by an Act of Obedience
accepted

Reformation of Manners. 9

accepted through *the Propitiation*; tho' you cannot satisfie the Justice of God, you may pacifie his Displeasure; and though you cannot make him amends, you may please him by your upright Zeal for the Glory of his Name; of this we have a Famous Proof and Instance in *Psal. 106. 30. Then stood up Phinehas and executed Judgment: and the Plague was stayed.*

2. Another part of Christ's Design, in coming into the World, was to destroy the Works of the Devil; for *this Cause was the Son of God manifested,* 1 Joh. 3. 8. Our Lord told his Disciples when the time of his Death drew near, *Now is the Judgment of this World; now shall the Prince of the World be cast out,* John 12. 31. He then sued out a Declaration of Ejectment against the Grand Usurper; and now, Gentlemen, in punishing these Works of Darkness, by legal Process, you deliver and execute the Ejectment upon the Prince of the World and his Vassals, and so you directly subserve the Great Design
C of

of Christ, who *Condemned Sin*, as a thing not fit to be tolerated in the World.

If any shall say Our Lord Jesus did not take such a Method to destroy Sin as you do; that he never inflicted Corporal Punishment, nor used an other Rod or Sword besides the Rod of Doctrine, and the Sword of the Spirit: I answer, This is not universally true, for we Read, he once made a *Scourge of small Cords, and drove the Buyers and Sellers out of the Temple*, John 2. 14, 15. And by that one Act of Punitive, Coercive, Power, he asserted a Right to have done more if he had pleased. But indeed it was not fit that he should have frequently used such a Power on Earth; it would not have suited so well that State of Humiliation, and *that Form of a Servant*, he had subjected himself unto.

But we know assuredly that God *has made this same Jesus, whom the Jews Crucified, both Lord and Christ*; he is Head over all things to the Church, and, according to his Promise, he *makes Kings*

Reformation of Manners. II

Kings Nursing-fathers, and Queens Nursing-mothers, and Magistrates are the Ministers of God for Good, Revengers to execute Wrath on them that do Evil, Rom. 13. 4. Your Practice therefore is Authoriz'd and Approved by our Lord Jesus, and directly serves his great Design, by striving against Sin, to destroy it in the World; and this Consideration sets you and your Cause above all the Calumnies and Contempt of wicked Men, if they are not ashamed to Embark in the same Cause and Design with the Devil, to affront God, and corrupt the World, by a direct Contravention to one great End of the Incarnation and Sufferings of Christ. You need not to be ashamed to engage with Christ, and follow the Captain of your Salvation, in endeavouring to Reduce, or at least Restrain, a Generation of Men that are up in Arms against him. But,

2dly, While you are thus engaged in the same Design with Christ, you

must expect the like Contradiction of Sinners against your selves. I need not tell you you must expect it, you have sufficiently felt it already; and have (especially of late) met with such Abuses in the Discharge of your Duty, that you had need to Watch over your own Hearts, lest the Resentment of your own Personal Wrongs should sway too much with you in the Prosecution of Offenders. This Contradiction which Christ endured, and you must endure, lyes both in Words and Deeds.

I. You must certainly meet with a great deal of *wordy* Contradiction; for you have to do with Men whose *Tongues are set on fire of Hell*; and they that never Scruple to Blaspheme their God, will never stick to Revile you: And this they will not only do in a Wild, Passionate, Extravagant, way of Railery, but in a more Malicious, Deliberate, Contrived, way of Accusation, which I take to be the proper meaning

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meaning of ἀντιλογία in the Text. Our blessed Lord did not only fall under the sudden, furious, wild, Reproaches of the Rabble, but he endured the contrived, premeditated, malicious, Contradiction of the Scribes and Pharisees; he was Reviled in Form, and with great Solemnity they charged him with a Plot against *Cæsar*, against the Temple, with a Design to deceive the People, and set up himself over them; they quarrelled his Person, his Practice, his Doctrine; and nothing he did or said could escape their Reproach; and if you have not met with the like treatment, you may expect it; the Obnoxious, Criminal, Party will doubtless Reproach your Design as Prejudicial to Church and State, tho' it manifestly tends to the great Security and Honour of both; they will misrepresent your Practices, and condemn your Methods of proceeding, how Just and Prudent soever, as clancular and unfair; they will certainly endeavour to Revenge the Disgrace you put
them

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them to, by casting all the Dirt upon you that ever they can.

2. This contradicting Spirit will not stop here, but will discover it self in actual, real, Opposition; and the sense of the Text may extend thus far, for as *εὐλογεῖν* is *Benefacere* as well as *Benedicere*, so *ἀντιλογεῖν* is to do evil as well as to speak evil. And this you will find, unless the Providence of God, and the Care of the Government, under whose Protection you are, prevent them. They will form themselves into Societies, and will take Council together to break *these Bands in sunder, and to cast away this Yoak from them*. They have already proceeded so far as to embrue their Hands in the Blood of some of your Society, and when they came to die for it, have declared *they were always Enemies to Reformation*; this is Contradiction with a witness, and shews a formed enmity against your Cause and your Persons too.

3dly, This Contradiction of Sinners against your selves, will be a great Temp-

Reformation of Manners. 15

pon Temptation to you to grow Weary, and
to Faint in your Minds. It was no dan-
gerous Temptation at all to Christ,
in whom the *Fulness of the Godhead*
dwelt Bodily, and in whom the Prince
of the World *could find nothing* to
fasten upon; but it may prove a dan-
gerous Snare to you, who find Cause
to complain of those *Weights and Sins*
that too easily beset you, to hinder you
in running the Race that is set before
you. This was the Case of those to
whom the Words of the Text are di-
rected, as you find in *v. 1.* of the Chap-
ter; and it is no defect of Charity to
suppose it may be so with you.

You must needs know there are
those Passions and Weaknesses found
with you, which this Temptation will
accommodate it self to, and work up-
on to cause you to desist from this Un-
dertaking.

It will tempt you to desist out of
Self-love and slavish Fear; you'll be
ready to say, why should I lose my
Time, neglect my Trade, and expose
my

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my Person, any longer, to reform a Generation of Obstinate, Desperate, Men? Why should I not take Warning from what I have suffered already, and from what some of our Friends have suffered from them?

You will be tempted to desist out of Displeasure, to lay aside all that Pity and Compassion towards these poor Wretches, which first induced you to attempt their Recovery; you'll be tempted by their Contradiction to shut up your Hearts against them, and to say, if they will Ruin themselves, let them go on; that which *Dies, let it Die; and that which Perisheth, let it Perish*; you'll be prompted to think, what, must we be more Merciful than God? He has said, *Ephraim is joined to Idols, let him alone*, Hof. 4. 7. God has thought fit, after some Time of Trial and Patience, to give Men up to their own Hearts Lusts, and to fill them with their own Ways.

And you'll be tempted to desist out of Despair of Success, and to say,
Why

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Why should they be stricken any more? They will revolt more and more; their Wound is incurable, and they refuse to be healed: You'll be ready to say tis time to give over, when the Application of the Remedy does but exasperate and heighten the Disease; now there is something that looks so like Reason in these Pleadings, that the Temptation is very strong, and in danger to prevail; but if you be convinced it is really a Temptation, you will not so easily yield to it, and doubtless it is so.

For tho' you are allowed a prudent Care to preserve your selves, yet if this grows up to such a distrustful *Fear of Man*, as hinders you from doing your Duty, it proves a great Snare, and you know how in that Black Calender of Men doom'd to Misery, the *Fearful lead the Van*, Rev. 21. 8.

And though God is pleased to set Bounds to his Grace and Patience towards Sinners, because he both certainly knows *when their Measure is filled*

filled up, and can retrieve his Glory another Way, this will not justify you in contracting your Charitable Attempts into so narrow a compass, when you do not know but a little more Patience, and further Trial, might have produced a very good Effect; however, you ought to do your Duty, and leave the Success to God, who will see to it, that though you lose your Labour, you shall not lose your Reward. And this leads me to the next Head.

4^{thly}, You must by no means yield to the Temptation, but adhere to your Cause, and go on with your Work. And that you may see how necessary it is that you should persevere in this Design, and not faint, I entreat you to consider a few things.

1. What is that Evil that you strive against? It is Immorality and Prophaneness. You are not put, Gentle men, upon the Drudgery of persecuting your Neighbours for Matters of Rel

gio

Reformation of Manners. 19

gion and Conscience, that indeed would be an Ungrateful and an Unchristian Task; and I wonder how any ingenuous Spirit could ever condescend to the Slavery of it; there are some Thoughts, methinks, very apt to arise in a Man's Mind, in such a Case, which must make him very uneasie. How do I know but these Men that I prosecute may be in the right, since they only differ from me in controverted Points, about which Wise and Good Men may very easily disagree? And though I am in the Right, who has impowered me to Judge for others? How comes my Conscience, and such as mine, to be the Standard of other Mens? And how unhappily am I imployed to punish Men for that which they think to be their Duty towards God, and who must needs therefore account me an Enemy, both to their Bodies and Souls, for the Disturbance I give them? Had you been put upon such Work as this, you might well be weary of it; but you

only punish those Actions which every Man's Conscience condemns him for ; they are the Laws of God and Nature that you enforce, and you have that in the Offender's own Breast that justifies you in what you do ; for Swearing, and Drunkenness, and Adultery, and Profanation of the Lord's Day, are such things as no Man's Conscience can plead for ; these are no Controverted Matters, but plainly against Nature, Reason, Peace, and Order ; and therefore they are the proper Matter of Coercive Power ; and you are upon proper Methods for the Remedying of so great an Evil ; if indeed Men would govern themselves by Principles of Reason and Religion, there would need no more to Restrain them from such Vile Practices ; but when Men are deaf to all Advice, and have erased all impressions of Virtue and Modesty out of their Minds, they sink themselves down into the Rank of Brutes, and you have no other Handle to take hold

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hold of them by, but Fear and Sence of outward Punishment. And this is prescribed as the most fit way of dealing with such Creatures. Prov. 26.

3. *A Whip for the Horse, a Bridle for the Ass, and a Rod for the Fool's Back.* And this is the best way of *answering a Fool according to his Folly*; as it follows, v. 5.

2. To what a Height was this Evil come, when you began to strive against it? Things were come to a sad pass in *England*, when this your Honest Design was first set on Foot.

Immorality was grown *Barefac'd and Impudent*; it no longer sought Corners; the Modesty of the Sinners, of former Days, was Despised, when they *that were Drunk, were Drunk in that Night*; Matters were come to that pass, that Men *declared their Sin as Sodom*; Vice was become Fashionable and Brave; they gloried in their Shame; and Men began to take more Pains to conceal their Virtue and Religion,

ligion, than their Vices and Profaneness.

It was grown *Epidemical* ; the Infection had taken all Sorts of People ; it had entred into the Families of the strictest Professors of Religion, and many Pious Parents saw their Children led away by the Error of the Wicked, running with them into all the Excesses of Riot, scoffing at that strictness in Religion which their Parents had endeavoured to Educate them in ; and you cannot but know, that many of these Degenerate Youths have brought down the Gray Hairs of their Aged Parents with Sorrow to the Grave.

Nay, further, had it not Corrupted the very Magistrates themselves in many Places ? Those that should have Punished and Supprest Vice, were become the avowed Patrons and Examples of it ; and which is saddest of all, the Ministry has not altogether escaped the Contagion ; he must be a stranger in *England* that knows not the truth

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truth of this, how in many Places (especially in the Country) the Scandalous Lives of pretended Ministers had produced the sad Effects we read of under the Conduct of *Eli's* Sons, *Men began to abhor the Offering of the Lord*; 1 Sam. 2. 17. It was time for you, Gentlemen, to Rise up against an Enemy that had advanc'd so far, and possess'd it self of such Fastnesses, and strong Holds, as these. And this is not all, but Vice having prevailed to such a degree, grew Violent and Outrageous, and was for forcing it self upon Men; Sober and Virtuous Men have been Hector'd, Abused, and in some Places knock'd on the Head, because they would not Drink, and Swear, and Debauch, themselves, as others did: It was high time to give a Check to such Insolence, for it was come to that pass, that either Vice or Virtue must be punished; and the Debauchees were grown so bold, that if you would not *Restrain* them, they would venture to *Constrain* you; so that

that indeed you have been but upon the Defensive, for these Men had actually made War upon all Morality; and if things had gone on, a Sober, Honest, Man had not been so safe in keeping the Laws of God, and the Land, as a profligate Wretch had been in breaking them all.

I add one thing more. We have Reason to believe this Deluge of Prophaneness, that had overspread the Nation, did not merely proceed from the Incogitancy of Mens Minds, and the Impetuosity of their Lusts, but that there was a most Pernicious Design at the bottom of it, formed and fomented by *Rome* and *France*, to prepare the Way for Popery and Tyranny, (not unlike the cursed Project of *Balaam*, to ensnare the Israelites with the Daughters of *Midian*) and a most Politick Contrivance this was, for when Men are become of no Religion, they will easily take up with that which is next to none; and those that are Slaves to their Lusts, will readily

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readily stoop to any other Burthen.

Gentlemen, I love not to aggravate Matters; and there's no need to do it in the present Case; if these things were not true, if they were not plain and manifest, I would never have mentioned them; but if they be undeniably true, you had good Reason to set on Foot such a Re-forming Work; and if there be still many sad Symptoms of such prevailing Wickedness left, 'tis too Early for you to desist, you must still go on with your Work.

3dly, Let me desire you to consider what the Consequence is like to be, if you should now Faint, and Desist from this good Work. I am no Prophet, nor the Son of a Prophet; but without a Spirit of Prophecy any Man may foresee a Train of Dismal Consequences that would ensue your Desponding and Deserting this Cause of Reformation.

Vice and Profaneness would Rage and Triumph more than ever; like

a mighty Torrent, that has been stopt for a while, it would overflow all Banks and Bounds; and all the Pains you have hitherto taken, would be so far from suppressing Immorality, that they would only give it the Occasion to try and know its own Strength, and to let the World see, that it neither can, nor will, be suppressed. All manner of Abominations will then be committed amongst us, and we shall become a Sodom and Egypt, yea, the very Suburbs and Borders of Hell.

The Presence and Favour of God will then depart from us, the Hearts and Graces of God's own People will languish, their *Righteous Souls* will be continually vexed with the filthy Communication of those amongst whom they live; they will have Cause to repeat the doleful Complaint of an Eminent Servant of God, now in Heaven

Alas poor England, that ever such Vermine should be bred in the Carcase of thy Glory! England, a Christian Nation, a Prote

Mr. Baxter.

stan

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stant Nation, the sweet Land of our Nativity, would then become a Nation not to be desired; every good Man would cry out, Wo is me, that I dwell in *Mesech*, and sojourn in the Tents of *Kedar*; and would Wish and Wish again, *Oh that I had Wings like a Dove, then would I flee away, and be at rest; so then would I wander far off, and remain in the Wilderiness.* And indeed it would be more desirable to dwell among Woods and Wild Beasts, and to converse only with Rocks and Rivers, than with such an Impious, Atheistical, Generation.

None will dare hereafter to attempt the Work of Reformation, if you that have gone on so long, and so far, in it, should now let it fall, especially when you are still encouraged to it, by the repeated Proclamations of our most Gracious and Excellent Queen, and by the Favour and Assistance of the Magistrates of this City, and the Judges of the Land, under all these Advantages you

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give up the Cause ; and you cannot expect it will ever be resumed, or attempted, any more in *England*.

And then to Consummate our Mi-
fery, when this Cause of God is thus
deserted by Men, God will take it
into his own Hand ; that God to whom
Vengeance belongeth, will shew him-
self, and plead against us, by his
mighty Power ; he will visit for these
things, and avenge himself upon
such a Nation as this ; and what Work
he will make, himself shall tell you in
Deut. 29. 22, 23, &c. *The Generation
to come of your Children that shall rise
up after you, and the Stranger that shall
come from a far Land, shall say, when
they see the Plagues of that Land, and the
Sicknesses that the Lord hath laid upon it,
and that the whole Land thereof is Brim-
stone, and Salt, and Burning, that it is not
sown, nor beareth, nor any Grass groweth
thereon ; like the Overthrow of Sodom
and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim,
which the Lord overthrew in his Anger,
and in his Wrath ; even all the Nations
shall*

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shall say, Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this Land? What meaneth the Heat of this great Anger? Then shall Men say, Because they have forsaken the Covenant of the Lord God of their Fathers, &c. And who shall live when the Lord does this?

5thly, The best Means you can use to prevent your Desponding and Fainting in your Work, is to look unto Jesus, to consider him that endured such Contradiction of Sinners against himself.

I would here,

1. Explain the Nature of this Duty. And,

2. Shew how conducive it would be to this blessed End and Purpose.

1. The Duty here enjoined is to Consider our Lord and Saviour, and what Contradiction of Sinners he endured against himself. The Word here rendered Consider, *ἀναλογίζομαι*, has a very Emphatical Sense; it

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it signifies so to Compare and Weigh one thing with another, that the Analogy or Proportion that there is betwixt the one and the other may appear; and that which we are here called to, is to *Calculate and Analogize* the Matter betwixt Christ and our selves, as to our striving against Sin, that we may see how much he has every way outdone us in that Matter, and so by his Example may be animated to do our Utmost in this Case, and not to be Weary, and Faint in our Minds; that this Analogy may be observed, consider such things as these.

1. Let us consider the Dignity of the Person of Christ, and compare it with the Meanness of our own; he was in the Form of God, and thought it no Robbery to be equal with God; consider him as Man, he was the ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως, the principal Part of the Creation of God, the Faithful Witness, the First-begotten of the Dead, and the Prince of the Kings
of

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of the Earth; and though some of these Titles belong unto him, as he is now Crowned with Glory and Honour at God's Right Hand, yet in the Days of his Flesh, his Disciples beheld his Glory, as the Glory of the only Begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth. Now if such a One was Contradicted, Reviled, and Abused, in the World; and endured such Contradiction; let not any of you think some strange thing has happen'd to you. *The Disciple is not above his Master, nor the Servant above his Lord; it is enough for the Disciple that he be as his Master, and the Servant as his Lord; if they have called the Master of the House Beelzebub, how much more them of his Household?* Mat. 10. 24, 25.

2. Consider the Perfection of Wisdom and Holiness that went through all he did, and compare it with the sinful Weaknesses that mix themselves with the best of your Actions; he was perfectly free from Pride and

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and Passion, from Envy and Selfishness, and therefore the Contradiction of Sinners against him was altogether Injurious, without the least Occasion given on his part; but the best of you all do not pretend to that Purity and Perfection in your whole Conduct, and therefore should patiently bear the Reproaches cast upon you, though very unjust, which God may permit to put you in Mind of your Failings, either in this or other Respects. This Construction you know David put upon *Shimei's* Cursing, and by that Means possessed himself in Patience.

3. Consider the Great and Violent Contradiction that our Saviour endured, and compare it with the lesser Opposition you have met with; the Verse following the Text suggests this to you, *You have not yet resisted unto Blood, striving against Sin.* But Christ did so. Consider how he endured the Cross, and despised the Shame; and will you be put by your Duty

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by hard Words, and ill Language.
If you have run with the Footmen, and they have Wearied you, how can you contend with Horses? Jer. 12. 5.

4. Consider how Freely and Voluntarily our Lord Jesus engaged himself in striving against Sin, and compare it with the Necessity that lyes upon you to do so; he had no way contributed to that Sin, against which he strove; but none of us can say so. The Sins of Professors encourage and harden the Profane; and all are obliged to quench that Fire they have helped to kindle. Christ was out of the reach of that Sin he strove against; it could never have ruined him; but if it prevail amongst us, it may be the Ruin of the Nation, and your selves may fall in the common Calamity.

5. Consider the absolute Power of Christ to have silenc'd all the Contradiction of Sinners, and compare with your own Weakness; he could easily have stopp'd the Mouths of

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Gainfayers; he could have Convinced them, or Confounded them, at his Pleasure; but he rather chose to Exercise that Patience, wherein he was imitable by us, than to exert that Power, which was peculiar to himself. 1 Pet. 2. 23.

6. Consider how Desperate and Irrecoverable our Case had been if Christ had Fainted *in his Work*, and compare it with the many Ways he has to secure his own Glory, though you should desist from *yours*. Sinners and Sinners may be punished without you; God can do it by his own immediate Hand; he can do it by his Holy Angels; he can send the Sword, the Famine, and the Pestilence, to *avenge the Quarrel of his Name and Covenant*. But who besides himself could have Ransomed your Souls *brought in an everlasting Righteousness, and made such an end of Sin as he did?* Now since he did not Faint in *saving us*, who had no other Saviour, we should not Faint in *serving him*.

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him, who has other Servants at his Command, and yet stands not in need of any of them.

2dly, It only remains that I should shew you in a few Particulars what an Advantage it will be to you in this good Work you are about, to look unto Jesus, and consider him that endured such Contradiction of Sinners against himself.

1. This will inspire you with Right Principles for your Work; and there's nothing will encourage you more, than a Consciousness of your Integrity; looking unto Jesus will fill you with Love to Him, and with Love to Men, and Zeal for the Honour of God; and while you Act from such Principles as these, you will not be easily drawn off from your Duty; the Righteous is Bold as a Lion; and the Testimony of a good Conscience will more than Ballance the Contradiction of Sinners.

2. By looking unto Jesus, you will learn to Manage this Work in the most becoming Way. His Example will Teach you to do nothing with Partiality, for there is no Respect of Persons with him. It will Teach you to do all with Humility, not *Boasting your selves against these Poor Withered Branches.* You will Act with Pity and Compassion to their Souls; Praying and Mourning for them, even when you Punish them. And from Christ you may learn to keep your selves from all appearance of those Evils that you censure in others. *They that are with the Lamb, are Called, and Chosen, and Faithful,* Rev. 17. 14.

3. By considering our Lord Jesus, you will draw down Grace and Strength sufficient for the Day, and and the Work of it. He is full of Grace and Truth, and out of his Fulness you derive your Supplies, by looking unto him. Faith is the great Means of Conveyance; and
more

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more you Eye him, the more freely will he Communicate Wisdom, Courage, Strength, and Peace, to your Souls. *Psal. 34. 5. They looked to him, and were enlightned, and their Faces were not ashamed.*

4. By looking unto Jesus, your zealous Endeavours for Reformation will be sanctified, and accepted of God; the sinful Defects of them will be pardoned, the Blood of Christ will be sprinkled upon them, and so they will become Works truly Christian and Evangelical. It was a Serious and Weighty Answer that our Divine *Herbert* gave to his Friend, who commended his Generosity in giving a large Summ to Repair a Church, as a very good Work. He replied, *Yes, Sir, if it be sprinkled with the Blood of Christ it is a good Work, or else it is not.* No Works are truly good, but those that are done through Faith in Christ.

Lastly

Lastly, While you thus consider him that endured such Contradiction of Sinners against himself, you cannot wholly Despair of Success; you will see that the Cause is Christ's, and therefore shall be a prevailing Cause at last; for *He shall Reign till all Enemies be put under his Feet; and the Upright shall have Dominion in the Morning.*

If the Nation should not be Reformed, yet *you shall be Glorious*; if this Epidemical Disease should be too Strong and Stubborn for you, yet it shall be remembred to your Immortal Honour, that there were a Set of Men in *England* that could not be content to stand by and see the Virtue of the Nation lost, without doing what they could to prevent it.

But if you look unto Jesus you need not Despair but it may yet be prevented; you will see in him, that the very same Sinners who Reviled and Reproached him, and Persecuted him
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even to Death, yet afterwards chang'd their Thoughts, and their Tune, and from Contradicting, they were brought to Cast themselves at his Feet, and Glorifie him, *Acts* 2. You are not to Despair but that you may live to see some of these Loose and Profane Persons, and their Children and Families, come and give you Thanks for the Care you have taken to prevent their utter Ruin.

However, while you go on in this Work, there is Ground to Hope God will not destroy the Nation.

I was pleas'd with an Observation I once heard from that most Eminent, Holy, Minister, Mr. *William Bagshaw* of *Derbyshire*, now with God; it was to this Effect. I have carefully Read and Considered the Methods of God's Providence with Nations and Churches, as they are Recorded both in Divine and Humane Writings, and I never found

found that God utterly cast off any
People whilst they were taking
some Steps towards Reformati-
on.

However, while you were in this
work, there is ground to hope
God will not deliver the Town.

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